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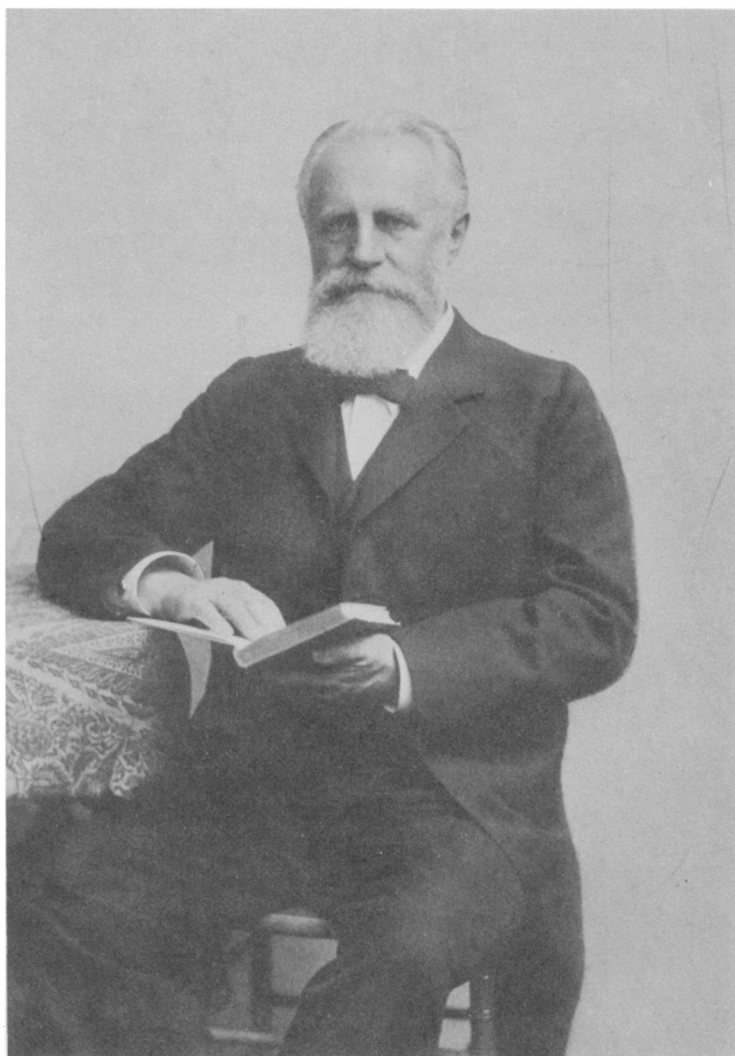
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EDWARD C. HEGELER.

Frontispiece to The Open Court.

In Memory of
Edward C. Hegeler

MR. Edward C. Hegeler of La Salle, Illinois, the founder of *The Open Court* and president of the Open Court Publishing Company, passed away peacefully after a short illness on Saturday, June 4, at eight o'clock in the evening.

Imposing in his appearance, venerable in his full snow-white hair and beard, and commanding respect with the serious expression of his broad-browed face, he was like one of the ancient patriarchs, wont to lead and to be obeyed. Being descended from an East Frisian family, he was a typical Teuton, tall and hardy, blue eyed and frank, manly and absolutely reliable in word and deed. He was a man incapable of telling a lie, and none who knew him would ever have believed that he could break a promise or shirk a duty.

He was born September 13, 1835, in the old Hansa town, Bremen, Germany, and he was proud of the Republican institutions of his native city.

It had been the wish of Mr. Hegeler's father, Hermann Dietrich Hegeler of Bremen, originally of Oldenburg, to have one of his sons settle in the United States, a country in which he himself had traveled and in the development of which he took a great interest. He was anxious to have his family represented here in this country and take an active part in its destinies. For this purpose he selected his youngest son Edward, who was educated with this end in view. It was thus but natural that Mr. Hegeler imbibed an American patriotism from his earliest childhood, but it would be wrong to think that his American patriotism ever antagonized his love of Germany, of the German people, customs and traditions, and their many noble aspirations in the arts and sciences. On the contrary,

he wanted to carry the German spirit into the new world on a soil favorable to its further growth. He wanted to transplant the seeds of German culture into his new home, and he was always ready to do his best to preserve friendly relations and mutual respect between the two nations.

Mr. Hegeler attended school in the Academy at Schnepfenthal. He then studied mechanical engineering at the Polytechnic Institute at Hanover, 1851-53, and in the school of mines at Freiberg, Saxony, 1853-56, here mainly under Prof. Julius Weisbach.

Accompanied by his friend and fellow student at Freiberg, Mr. F. W. Matthiessen, Mr. Hegeler traveled for some months on the Continent and in England, whence they embarked for America and landed in Boston in March 1857. While looking over the country for a proper place to settle they learned of Friedensville, Pennsylvania, where a zinc factory had been built, but it stood idle because the owners had not been able to manufacture the zinc. Mr. Matthiessen and Mr. Hegeler, then 21 and 22 years old, stepped in and with the same furnace succeeded in producing spelter, which at that time was pioneer work in America, for hitherto this metal had been imported from Europe. On account of the financial stringency of 1856, which still persisted in 1857, the owners of the Friedensville works refused to put more money into the enterprise, while neither Mr. Hegeler nor Mr. Matthiessen felt justified in risking their own capital, mainly because they had no confidence in the mines, which actually gave out eight years later.

Having further on investigated conditions in Pittsburg and Johnsville, Pa., and also in southeastern Missouri, Mr. Hegeler and Mr. Matthiessen finally decided upon La Salle, Illinois, because its coal fields were nearest to the ore supply at Mineral Point, Wisconsin. Here they started the Matthiessen and Hegeler Zinc Works on a small scale, on the same spot on which the present large plant is still operated.

Mr. Hegeler returned in 1860 to Germany, where on April 5 he married Camilla Weisbach, the daughter of his admired teacher. In July of the same year the young couple settled in La Salle, where with few interruptions they lived until the end of their lives. Mrs.

Hegeler died only two years ago, May 28, 1908. Ten children were born to them, of whom seven survive, two sons and five daughters; and there are twenty-three grandchildren.

Mr. Hegeler's religion was simple enough, but like many simple things it is not easy for every one to understand. His ancestors had belonged to the Reformed Church, and the intellectual atmosphere of his father's house which surrounded him in his childhood was liberal. In Schnepfenthal he came in contact with the pietistic traditions of that institution, and he was deeply impressed with its devotional spirit, especially as it found utterance in song. When further experience in life broadened him, he surrendered his belief in Christian dogmatism but he preserved that seriousness of purpose, that moral endeavor, that profound faithfulness which characterizes all true religion. He had found the necessary correctives in the monistic conception of science. His idea of God had changed, but his "Religion of Science" would not dispense with God. With Goethe he saw God in nature, and recognized him as that power which enforces a definite kind of conduct. Morality is not what we think is good, but what can stand the test in the furnace of thorough and continued experience; it is for us to decipher the handwriting of God.

There was no need to look for a heaven in the clouds; the promises of providence fulfil all the expectations we can have here on earth. Every new discovery reveals new glories, and in this sense Mr. Hegeler remembered an old Moravian hymn expressing the sentiments of the passage in 1 Corinthians ii. 9:

"Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

"Was noch kein Auge sah,
Was noch kein Ohr vernahm,
Was je hienieden
Kein Menschenherz empfand,
Das hat Gott denen
Mit Huld beschieden,
Die bis an's Ende
Getreu ihn lieben."

Mr. Hegeler took great interest in psychology and found the key to its problems in the proposition, "I am my ideas." He argued that a man is wherever his ideas are. Our ancestors survive in us, and we shall survive wherever future generations think our thoughts and act as we would have acted. He deemed it the highest duty of every man to work out his own immortality. In his own conception, though he has ceased to be with us in the flesh, he has not passed from us. He is with us in spirit, and his soul remains a potent presence so long as his work, his thoughts, his ideals will persist.

For the sake of presenting his solution of the religious problem, the foundation of religion and ethics on a strictly scientific basis, Mr. Hegeler founded and endowed The Open Court Publishing Company, which has published *The Open Court* since February 17, 1887, and *The Monist* since October 1, 1890; the former in the first year as a fortnightly, then as a weekly, and since 1897 as a monthly periodical, illustrated and popular in style; the latter a quarterly serving the same purpose, but open also to a more rigorous scientific treatment of religio-philosophical questions.

In the light of a scientific interpretation of the main doctrines of religion, Mr. Hegeler began thus to find a deep meaning in the old dogmas, and his sympathies were not limited to the faith of his childhood but to all religions, of which each in its own way more or less clearly expresses the same truths and preaches the same ethics. He counted among his friends not only some of the greatest scientists of the age, men like Ernst Mach and Ewald Hering, George J. Romanes, Hugo De Vries and the late Oxford scholar F. Max Müller, but also Buddhists and Catholic priests, Protestants and Freethinkers. With all the definiteness of his convictions he was broad in his sympathies, and to sum up we may without exaggeration say of him:

"He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."